

Town of Los Altos Hills

City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 12, 2009
Council Chambers, 26379 Fremont Road

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Warshawsky called the City Council Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Town Hall.

Present: Mayor Dean Warshawsky, Mayor Pro Tem Kerr (joined the meeting at 7:55 pm. Kerr did not participate in consideration of Agenda Items #4 and #5), Councilmember Rich Larsen, Councilmember Jean Mordo and Councilmember Ginger Summit

Absent: None

Staff: City Manager Carl Cahill, City Engineer/Public Works Director Richard Chiu, Finance Director Nick Pegueros, City Attorney Steve Mattas, and City Clerk Karen Jost

APPOINTMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation of Award recognizing Los Altos Hills Solar Installation –Environment California

By consensus of the Council, the agenda was re-ordered to allow the presentation to be made later in the meeting.

Glynnis Hoekson, on behalf of Environment California, presented the Council with an award recognizing Los Altos Hills for the number of solar installations in the Town. Los Altos Hills ranked 5th in the state for the number of solar installations per 1,000 households.

2. Certificate of Commendation

Mayor Warshawsky presented a Certificate of Commendation to Los Altos Hills resident Ken Margerum honoring him for his induction into the College Football Hall of Fame. The Mayor noted that in addition to his other accomplishments, Mr. Margerum earned Academic All-American status at Stanford, and had been drafted by the Chicago Bears and played on their 1985 Super Bowl championship team.

3. Introduction of Community Relations Youth Associate Members-Roger Burnell, Community Relations Committee Co-Chair

Roger Burnell, Co-Chair of the Community Relations Committee, introduced Allika Walvekar, Los Altos Hills Youth Commissioner. Ms Walvekar has worked closely with the Standing Committee to identify High School youths in Los Altos Hills that had an interest in serving on the proposed Youth Commission. Burnell reviewed with Council the proposed revised duties of the Youth Commissioner and the Youth Commissions' charter, goals and objectives. Ten resident youths have attended Community Relations Committee meetings; been screened by Walvekar and members of the Committee Relations Committee; and, were currently serving as Youth Associate Members of the Standing Committee. (The identified proposals would be considered by Council as Agenda Item # 14).

Allika Walvekar, Youth Commissioner, thanked the City Council for the opportunity to introduce the ten Youth Associate Members. The students made brief statements to the Council expressing their interests and enthusiasm in being part of the Youth Commission. They were: Mita Ahy and Sam Coleman (Los Altos High), Namrata Anand (The Harker School), Courtney Chuang (Castilleja), Isha Thapa, Maysa Torabi, Connor Radlo, and Audrey Waschura (all four from Gunn High School). Member, Karly Osborne (Mountain View High) was not present at the introduction.

Mayor Warshawsky thanked the students for their commitment to the Community. Councilmember Larsen also thanked Walvekar and the youths and noted that there was a good representation of the surrounding high schools on the Youth Commission.

4. Appointments to Standing Committees:

MOTION SECONDED AND CARRIED: Moved by Larsen, seconded by Mordo and passed unanimously to appoint Kunjan Shah to the Standing Environmental Initiatives Committee for a term of four years.

MOTION SECONDED AND CARRIED: Moved by Larsen, seconded by Summit and passed unanimously to reappoint Pat Ley and Sandra Humphries to the Standing Environmental Design and Protection Committee for terms of four years.

4A. Mountain View/Los Altos Union High School Update – Dr. Barry Groves, Superintendent

By consensus of the Council, the agenda was re-ordered to allow the presentation to be made later in the meeting

Dr. Barry Groves, Superintendent Mountain View/Los Altos Union High School District, presented Council with an overview of the District's schools' profiles. Groves highlighted academic achievements of the students, as well as their community commitments, in particular, their involvement in projects internationally. He commented that enrollment projections anticipate that the school district attendance would increase by 900 more students within the next 10 years. In light of this, the school district has been reviewing the option of a bond measure for the June 2010 elections.

Joe Mitchner, member, Board of Trustees, Mountain View/Los Altos Union High School outlined the proposed bond measure to Council. Funding realized from the bond would be used for capital improvements in anticipation of the increase in student population and focus efforts to improve energy efficiency on the campuses through the installation of solar panels, retrofitting of windows, and insulation. The proposed bond would be a 5 year extension of the existing bond which ends in 2024. There would be no increase in the existing rate. The District would keep the Town apprised on the issue.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTIONED SECONDED AND CARRIED: Moved by Mordo, seconded by Larsen and passed unanimously to approve the items on the consent calendar; specifically:

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes: Regular City Council Meeting September 24, 2009
6. Public Facilities Fee Program Annual Report – Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2009 (Staff: N. Pegueros)
7. Approval of Sanitary Sewer Reimbursement Agreement between the Town of Los Altos Hills and Albert Thaik – (Staff: R. Chiu) Resolution No. 63-09
8. Acceptance of the Taaffe Pathway Project – (Staff: R. Chiu) Resolution No. 64-09
9. Letter in Support of County Participation in the “CaliforniaFIRST Program”

PRESENTATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Bob Hines, Silicon Valley Leadership Group, invited the Council and the LAH community to participate in the 5th Annual Applied Materials Silicon Valley Turkey Trot to be held on the morning of Thanksgiving Day. Proceeds from this event benefit the Santa Clara Family Health Foundation, Second Harvest Food Bank and the Housing Trust of Santa Clara County.

Chris Landis, Marketing Manager, Akeena Solar of Los Gatos, addressed the Council and encouraged them to participate in the Turkey Trot’s Mayor’s Cup Challenge. For the competition, cities would be grouped into different classifications based on population. Los Altos Hills would compete in the small cities category with “points” awarded for participation by the Council and City Manager.

Councilmember Larsen noted that the Council had received a letter from the Huntington’s Disease Society, Northern California Chapter thanking them for their recent grant. A copy of the letter was available for Council on the dais.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

10. Town Goal

- Consideration of Request from Hidden Villa for Town Support and Initiation of Annexation

Martin Neiman, Hidden Villa Board member and chair of the working group tasked with the annexation introduced the additional members of the group. They included: Chris Overington, Executive Director; Diane Ciesinski, Chair of the Board; Bill Whitmer, Treasurer; Bob Sator, Board member; and Marc Sidel, staff at Hidden Villa.

Neiman proceeded with a PowerPoint presentation on the background, mission and core activities of Hidden Villa. He provided an overview of the reasons they were in support of the annexation of Hidden Villa to the Town. They included; the opportunity for closer integration with the local community and a preference to interact with the Town that had an understanding of their values rather than the County. Neiman outlined the process of how Hidden Villa arrived at their present position, from the preliminary discussions with the Town and the investigation of a study group which had been overwhelmingly supportive of the annexation. The Hidden Villa Board had voted unanimously to move forward with the annexation, and a letter was sent to the Mayor stating their intent. Their letter had been included in the agenda packet before Council.

The agency fees and costs for the annexation have been estimated at \$51,000. Additionally, there will be internal costs such as legal representation, survey and title work, as well as staff and Board time that Hidden Villa will incur. While Hidden Villa has taken substantial measures to keep costs under control in light of the challenging economic times, Neiman offered that there was concern with their ability to meet the costs associated with the annexation. He requested that the Town consider waiving or donating their fees as well as cover the associated LAFCO annexation costs that would be incurred.

Mayor Warshawsky thanked him for his presentation.

Council Discussion:

Councilmember Summit expressed surprise at the costs associated with the annexation, but believed it was appropriate for the Council to take the necessary action to move forward with the proposal.

Councilmember Mordo also supported the annexation and was excited for Hidden Villa to be part of Los Altos Hills.

Larsen thanked Neiman, and informed Council that he had met with the Hidden Villa Board two weeks ago and it had been very positive. He had also toured the site with Mayor Pro Tem Kerr. Larson expressed his support for the annexation and offered that he was looking forward to the annexation and the opportunity the Town to become a strategic partner with Hidden Villa. He hoped for it to proceed with reasonable speed. He suggested that the City Manager and Planning Director develop an action plan and timeline for the annexation.

City Manager Cahill viewed this annexation as a partnership with Hidden Villa, and suggested in lieu of the fees that Hidden Villa has requested the Town absorb, the Town be might be afforded some preferences in meeting space as well as well as reduced fees at Hidden Villa.

Councilmember Mordo suggested the Town's Parks and Recreation Committee work with Hidden Villa to explore further mutual benefits of this partnership and develop a proposal.

Mayor Pro Tem Kerr offered that the idea should not be to recoup the expenses that the Town will incur with the annexation, but rather forge a synergy with Hidden Villa wherein, the ultimate benefactors would be the children and residents of the Town, in the form of better recreational programs. Councilmember Mordo clarified that it was not his intention for a quid pro quo, but rather to establish a mutually beneficial partnership with Hidden Villa.

Hidden Villa Executive Director Chris Overington commented that he was open to the dialogue, and looked forward to working with the Town. He noted the enthusiasm of the youths of the Youth Commission earlier in the evening, and the opportunities that Hidden Villa could present to this group for local community service.

Councilmember Mordo proceeded to nominate Councilmember Summit and Kathy Evans, Co-Chair of the Community Relations Committee, to work with staff and Hidden Villa to explore the partnership possibilities.

OPENED PUBLIC COMMENT

Jitze Couperus, Page Mill Road, suggested that it would be beneficial for the Town to engage in an outreach program with Town residents to alert them to the positive and beneficial aspects of the annexation. Mayor Warshawsky thanked him for his suggestion and offered that an article would be forthcoming in the Town Crier, and noted that the annexation would be featured in the next Town's newsletter. Councilmember Larsen suggested a future Q&A session at Hidden Villa on this issue.

City Manager Cahill clarified that Hidden Villa would still incur the costs of the boundary survey. Mordo questioned what action was required of Council regarding the fees and deposits. Cahill offered that it would be best for Council to approve amount of the estimation, and should the costs exceed \$51,000, staff would return to Council for their approval.

MOTION SECONDED AND CARRIED; Moved by Mordo, seconded by Kerr and passed unanimously to approve an amount not-to-exceed \$51,070 for costs associated with the annexation of Hidden Villa.

MOTION SECONDED AND CARRIED: Moved by Kerr, seconded by Mordo and passed unanimously to form an Ad Hoc Subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Committee that would include Councilmember Summit, Kathy Evans and staff from the Parks and Recreation Department, as well as representatives of Hidden Villa to explore the possibilities of partnership between the two entities.

City Manager Cahill requested a written statement of intent from Hidden Villa in support of meeting space, working partnerships with Parks and Recreation, and future potential environmental programs with the Town.

11. Discussion of Agenda Topics for the Special Joint Meeting of Los Altos Hills and Los Altos Hills City Councils.

The City Clerk advised Council that the joint study session with the City of Los Altos had been scheduled for December 1st. Los Altos has proposed the following discussion items for the agenda: Los Altos Hills' experience in undergrounding and the Town's interest in a survey of LAH residents to assess their interest in the LA Civic Center project.

Council discussion ensued on the areas of interests that the Los Altos Hills Council would like agendized for discussion. The following items were proposed: the future of downtown Los Altos; the feasibility of joint programs with the two cities Parks and Recreation Departments, with an emphasis on seniors; and collaboration on the CERT program

NEW BUSINESS

12. Consideration of Budget Amendment-Finance Department Staffing Allocation (Staff: N. Pegueros)

Finance Director Nick Pegueros introduced the item to Council. Effective July 1, 2009, the finance department implemented a reorganization plan and took the salary and benefits savings resulting from the elimination of a position and reallocated those savings resulting from the elimination of a position and reallocated those savings to a professional services budget of \$60,000 and a part-time staff budget of \$55,000.

Pegueros noted that four months into the reorganization, staff has determined that the plan's reliance on professional services has not yielded the anticipated benefit. He cited two outstanding issues that had not been anticipated: the current structure did not provide the Town with a viable succession plan in the event of staff absences or turnover; and, the current structure relied too heavily on the department head for day-to-day operations.

To address the critical organization need, staff was recommending the creation of a Finance Manager position that would be staffed in-house. The position was considered critical to the long term stability of the finance department.

MOTIONED SECONDED AND CARRIED: Moved by Mordo, seconded by Summit and passed unanimously to approve a new job classification and salary range for the position of "Finance Manager", and to amend the Finance Department's staffing allocation to authorize 1.0 full time equivalent Finance Manager.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

13. Verbal Report-Planning Director

City Manager Cahill reported that Planning Director Debbie Pedro was out of the country. No follow-up action was required of Council on planning issues.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, AND COUNCILMEMBERS ON OUTSIDE AGENCIES

14. Consideration of Proposed Charter for Los Altos Hills Youth Commission and Youth Commissioner Revised Duties and Charges-Roger Burnell, Community Relations Chair

Discussion ensued regarding which of the two committees – Parks and Recreation or Community Relations- the Youth Commission should be part of. Council commended the time and efforts of Chairperson Burnell in the recruitment of the Youth Commissioners. There was consensus that the Youth Commission should be part of Community Relations Committee.

MOTIONED SECONDED AND CARRIED: Moved by Larsen, seconded by Summit and passed unanimously to approve the proposed charter of the Los Altos Hills Youth Commission and Youth Commissioner Revised Duties and Charges.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Summit reported that she had attended the Standing Education Committee meeting, and the Bullis Charter School v. Los Altos School District court hearing. To date no the judge had not ruled on the case however a decision is expected in 90 days. Summit encouraged the Council to attend the Joint Community Volunteer Service Awards Luncheon to be held in Los Altos on December 4, 2009.

Councilmember Mordo attended the North County Library Authority meeting, and he reported that a new 20 year parcel tax was being considered for the June 2010 elections. The proposed parcel tax would allow the library to continue offering the existing hours of operation.

Mayor Pro Tem Kerr reported that he had attended the SCCCA Selection Committee meeting to participate in the appointment of the cities representative to LAFCO. Kerr noted that he had also attended a Joint Silicon Valley Leadership forum that had focused on energy efficiency issues. He reported that there was progress on the municipal financing proposal and expects a program in summer, 2010. Kerr reported that there were ongoing efforts for the Town to have representation on the VTA Board.

Councilmember Larsen reported on his attendance at the VTA Policy Advisory Committee meeting. He also attended the Santa Clara County Emergency Protection Committee meeting where the issue of wildfires had been discussed. A Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Project (SVRIP) for an advanced radio system was under discussion. A Joint Powers Agreement was being considered as the funding vehicle for the project. Larsen was of the opinion that the Town would support the proposal, but not commit funds towards it.

STAFF REPORTS

City Manager:

City Manager Cahill deferred his report to City Engineer/Public Works Director Richard Chiu. Chiu presented a PowerPoint presentation updating Council on the construction at Westwind Community Barn. He reported that the project was on schedule, and on budget. He pointed out that although some of jobs were re-sequenced, it would not negatively

impact the project. Councilmember Mordo commented that there had been an issue with the historical weather vanes and the new cupolas, but it had been resolved.

City Attorney – No report

City Clerk – No report

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by consensus of the City Council at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Jost
City Clerk

The minutes of the November 11, 2009 Regular City Council meeting were approved as presented at the December 10, 2009 Regular City Council Meeting.